VISIT…

Test 3C: Noticing differences

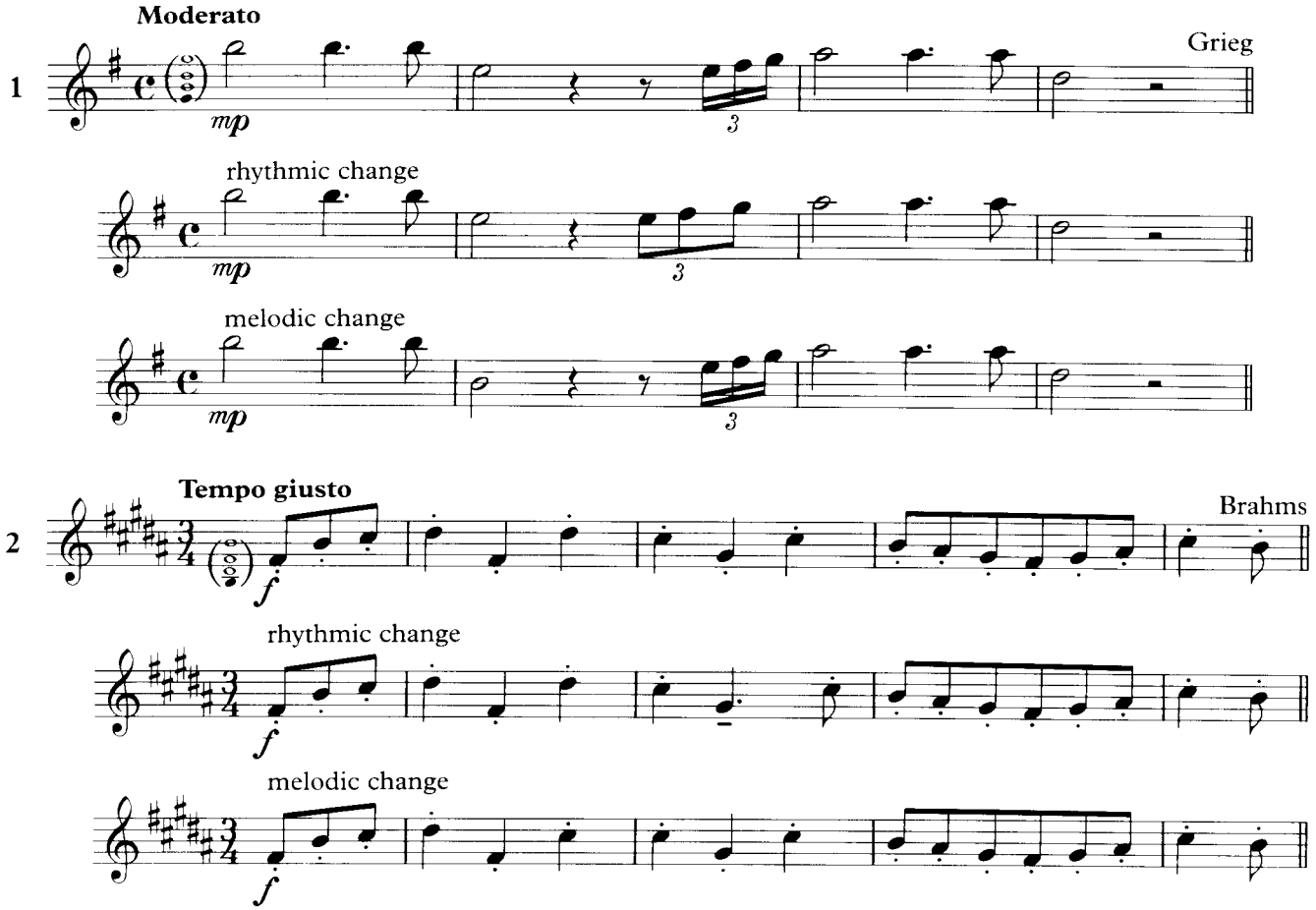
'To recognise a rhythmic or melodic change to a four-bar phrase in a major or minor key played twice by the examiner, with the change being made in the second playing. Candidates will be required to recognise and tap, sing or describe the change. The key-chord and tonic will first be sounded and the pulse indicated. The examiner will be prepared to play both versions of the phrase a second time if necessary.'

This test follows on from Test 2C. The changes are slightly less obvious, but the same principles apply both as regards spotting the difference and the way it can be described or illustrated. Before proceeding to the Practice Tests below, reference should be made to the preparatory advice given for Test 2C.

In the examination the phrases are extended to four bars, so it is advisable to stretch pupils' concentration and keep them alert by playing whole sections of pieces in two different versions, altering a particular rhythm or changing the melody. Vary examples, but it is wise, especially at first, to have only one kind of change – rhythmic or melodic. Later, as confidence develops, two or even three changes could be included in any one piece. However, in the examination only one change will be made.

Take every opportunity to discuss various ways in which pieces might be played to develop discriminating and discerning attitudes towards performance, especially in respect of:

balance between parts in keyboard or ensemble performance
tonal shaping of phrases
articulation
variation of tempo (including rubato)

PRACTICE TESTS

As in Grade 2, introduce the test by saying: 'I shall play a short phrase twice and will change the rhythm or the melody in the second playing. I would like you to tell me what the difference was. Here is the key-chord .... and the tonic .... Here is the pulse .....'